

**Connecticut Commission on Culture & Tourism**

**Arts Committee Meeting**

**March 2, 2009**

**Conference Call**

**Hartford, Connecticut**

**Participants:** Carolyn Cicchetti, Walter Fiederowicz, Sandra Evoy, Betty Hale, Ann Sheffer, Ted Yudain

**Staff:** An-Ming Truxes, Lu Rivera

**Unable to Participate:** Daniel Heffernan, John Hollander, Paul Pozzi, Michael Price, Clem Roy, Rita Schmidt

**Call to Order**

Ted Yudain called the conference call to order at 12:03 pm

**Approval of Minutes**

The minutes of the February 2, 2009 conference call were approved.

Motion: Carolyn Cicchetti

Second: Betty Hale

Unanimous approval

**Report from the Committee Chair**

There was no report from the Committee Chair.

**Report from the Arts Division Director**

The stimulus bill signed into law by President Obama on February 17 includes \$50 million for the NEA. Forty (40) percent of the \$50 million will be distributed to state arts agencies and regional arts organizations, and sixty (60) percent will be awarded on a competitive basis to nonprofit organizations. The NEA has set up a page entitled "Recovery" on its website with place holders for grant guidelines and programs to be posted by March 18 (by March 8 on grants.gov). These grants will focus on preserving jobs in the arts threatened by the current economic downturn.

The FY09 appropriations bill passed by the U.S. House of Representatives on February 24 includes \$155 million for the NEA, an increase of \$10.3 million over the current funding of \$144.7 million. The proposed increase would be in addition to the \$50 million allocated to the NEA by the economic stimulus bill.

The financial crisis has hit hard non profit institutions across the nation. A number of Connecticut organizations are facing cash flow problems, cutting their budgets, canceling or reducing their performances, reducing or eliminating staff. Connecticut Opera officially closed on February 12 after 65 years in business. UCONN is contemplating closing the Benton Museum and the Museum of Natural History. Stamford Center for the Arts filed for bankruptcy last summer. NBC Universal is negotiating a lease with SCA to set up television production operations at the Rich Forum. There have been several leadership changes – directors of organizations leaving or retiring such as Jack Russell at the Brookfield Crafts Center, Jean Perkins at Guilford Art Center; and Julie McClennan at the Shoreline Arts Alliance.

Organizations are taking positive steps to assist each other. Theaterworks, the Hartford Symphony and the Bushnell are honoring Connecticut Opera subscribers' tickets for their own performances. Organizations are stepping up communications with board members and donors, reducing fundraising costs, increasing use of technology and social networking and looking to share services.

### **Action Item Recommendations**

#### **FY09 Revised Connecticut Arts Endowment Fund Distribution**

Motion: Ann Sheffer

Second: Carolyn Cicchetti

Recused: Betty Hale, Opera New England  
Ted Yudain, Curtain Call, Ted  
Ann Sheffer, Wesport Country Playhouse

Unanimous approval

#### **Directory of Performing Artists – addition of 16 artists/groups**

Motion: Ann Sheffer

Second: Betty Hale

Unanimous approval

#### **Directory of Teaching Artists – addition of 7 artists**

Motion: Sandy Evoy

Second: Ann Sheffer

Unanimous approval

#### **Connecticut Artists Collection FY09 Budget**

Motion: Carolyn Cicchetti

Second: Ann Sheffer

Unanimous approval

### **Adjournment**

The meeting adjourned at 1:06 pm.

Motion: Ann Sheffer

Second: Sandy Evoy

Respectfully submitted by: Lourdes Rivera